

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 ACDA-07 IO-13 PM-05 NSC-05
SP-02 SS-15 L-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 /078 W
-----039225 221805Z /46

P R 221642Z JUL 77
FM USMISSION USBERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4957
AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
CINCEUR
CINCUSAFE
CINCUSAREUR
USELMLO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USBERLIN 1933

CINCEUR FOR POLAD AND OPS
CINCUSAREUR FOR POLAD AND OPS
CINCUSAREUR FOR POLAD, OPS, AEAGC-COC & AEAAG-AP

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, MILI, WB, US, UR, FR, UK
SUBJECT: PRESS COVERAGE OF FLAG TOURS

REF: (A) USBERLIN 1836, DTG 081705Z JUL 77

SUMMARY. PRESS HAS SHOWN INCREASING INTEREST IN SOVIET
FLAG TOURS SINCE REF A AND WE HAVE REPORT SPRINGER PRESS
MAY PUBLICIZE HEAVILY ALLEGED ERRATIC DRIVING OF SOVIET
MILITARY BUS IN KURFUERSTENDAMM AREA ON JULY 22. IN
GENERAL, SOVIET MILITARY VEHICLES IN WEST BERLIN,
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NOW AMOUNTING TO ABOUT 100 PER WEEK, HAVE SHOWN REASONABLE
RESPECT FOR SAFE DRIVING REQUIREMENTS ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE
OBVIOUSLY BEEN INTENT UPON MAKING THEIR PRESENCE
KNOWN. DURING PAST WEEK, BERLIN POLICE WERE INSTRUCTED
NOT TO "TAIL" SOVIET VEHICLES AND TO AVOID AGGRESSIVE
ACTION OF ANY SORT. WE, AND BRITISH AND FRENCH ARE
LIKEWISE RESTRICTING OURSELVES TO REPORTS ABOUT WHERE-

ABOUTS OF SOVIET VEHICLES, ALTHOUGH BRITISH AND FRENCH DO RESERVE THEMSELVES THE RIGHT TO FOLLOW SOVIET VEHICLE IF THEY BELIEVE THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT SOVIET VEHICLE IS ENGAGED IN IMPROPER BEHAVIOR. END SUMMARY.

1. WE HAVE REPORT THAT SPRINGER PRESS WILL CARRY STORY JULY 23 REPORTING THAT TWELVE SOVIET MILITARY VEHICLES CAME THROUGH CHECKPOINT CHARLIE ON MORNING OF JULY 22 ALONG WITH A SOVIET MILITARY BUS (OUR CHECKPOINT REPORTS EIGHT). SOVIET MILITARY BUS ALLEGEDLY CIRCLED AROUND TEMPELHOF, THEN PROCEEDED TO KURFUERSTENDAMM AREA, WHERE IT REACHED SPEEDS OF 70 TO 90 KPH AND RAN A TOTAL OF TWENTY-ONE (21) RED LIGHTS. SPRINGER JOURNALIST TOLD BRITISH PAO HE HAD PHOTOGRAPHS OF SOVIET BUS BREAKING RED LIGHTS TAKEN FROM A PURSUING SPRINGER PRESS CAR. THESE PHOTOGRAPHS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO ALLIES.

2. LEAD EDITORIAL IN TAGESSPIEGEL JULY 22 NOTES THAT SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, SOVIETS DEMANDED AN END TO ALLIED FLAG TOURS ON GROUNDS THAT THERE EXISTED NO FOUR-POWER STATUS FOR GREATER BERLIN. SUBSEQUENTLY, EDITORIALIST BOELKE CONTINUES, SOVIETS INCREASED NOTICEABLY THEIR PATROLS IN WEST BERLIN, THUS DEMONSTRATING THE EXISTENCE OF THE FOUR-POWER STATUS THAT THEY HAD DECLARED AS OBSOLETE. THIS CONTRADICTION CANNOT HAVE ESCAPED THE SOVIETS AND THE QUESTION THEREFORE ARISES WHAT THEIR REAL MOTIVE IS
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IN RAISING THE NUMBER OF THEIR TRIPS THROUGH WEST BERLIN. BOELKE CONCLUDES THAT THE SOVIETS PROBABLY WANT TO CREATE A CERTAIN ANNOYANCE AND WOULD PERHAPS NOT BE ANGRY IF INCIDENTS OCCURRED IN WHICH ALLIED MILITARY PERSONNEL WOULD HAVE TO ACT. THE SOVIETS WOULD THEN HAVE AN EXCUSE TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST ALLIED FLAG TOURS IN EAST BERLIN AND THEN TO DEMAND THAT BOTH SIDES REACH AGREEMENT IN ORDER TO AVOID INCIDENTS. SUMMING UP, BOELKE CONCLUDES THAT SOVIETS HAD NOT DROPPED THEIR DESIRE TO DO AWAY WITH ALLIED FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT IN GREATER BERLIN, BUT ONLY THAT THEY ARE NOT PREPARED TO TAKE UNILATERAL ACTION IN EAST BERLIN TO ACCOMPLISH THAT AIM.

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USELMLO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 USBERLIN 1933

CINCEUR FOR POLAD AND OPS

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3. SINCE REF WAS SENT, SOVIETS HAVE MAINTAINED ROUGHLY TWO AND ONE-HALF TIMES THE NUMBER OF VEHICLES IN WEST BERLIN AS ALLIES TOGETHER SEND TO EAST BERLIN. ADDITIONAL SOVIET VEHICLES NOT INVOLVED IN DAILY ADMINISTRATIVE RUNS TO SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN WSB HAVE GENERALLY STAYED LONGER THAN THOSE ON NORMAL ADMINISTRATIVE TRIPS, IN A FEW CASES MORE THAN THREE HOURS. GRAND TOTAL NOW AMOUNTS TO ABOUT 100 SOVIET VEHICLES A WEEK IN WEST BERLIN.

4. ALTHOUGH OSTENTATIOUS, SOVIET VEHICLES HAVE THUS FAR BEHAVED REASONABLY WELL. THERE HAVE BEEN A FEW MINOR CONFIDENTIAL

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INFRACTIONS OBSERVED AND ONE ACCIDENT CAUSED BY SOVIETS, ALTHOUGH IN LATTER CASE, SOVIETS BEHAVED PROPERLY, DID NOT LEAVE SCENE UNTIL BRITISH MPS AND BERLIN POLICE HAD COMPLETED INVESTIGATION.

5. WE ARE ENDEAVORING TO OBTAIN DETAILS OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN GOVMAYOR STOBBE AND CONGEN BYKOV ON JULY 20 WHICH, ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, ALSO TOUCHED ON FLAG TOURS. PRIOR TO CALL, A SOVIET MILITARY CAR HAD PARKED FOR TWO HOURS IN FRONT OF RATHAUS SCHOENEBOURG.

6. DURING PAST WEEK, ALLIED PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISERS ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS TO POLICE IN THEIR SECTORS STRESSING THAT COMMANDANTS WISHED TO AVOID INCIDENTS WITH SOVIET VEHICLES. ALTHOUGH POLICE HAVE STANDING REGULATIONS FOR ROUTINE SURVEILLANCE OF SOVIET VEHICLES, THEY HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED NOT TO ENGAGE IN "TAILING." POLICE WILL PROVIDE ALLIES WITH INFORMATION THEY DEVELOP DURING COURSE OF NORMAL POLICE PATROLS ABOUT WHEREABOUTS AND ACTIONS OF SOVIET VEHICLES. OUR MILITARY PERSONNEL, INCLUDING MPS, ARE UNDER SIMILAR INSTRUCTIONS AS ARE BRITISH AND FRENCH ALTHOUGH LATTER ARE FREE TO "TAIL" IF THEY BELIEVE THERE IS CAUSE TO DO SO.

7. USCOB CONCURS. GEORGE

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